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STOP DEVASTATING SEQUESTER

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, President Obama had a chance last night to lay out a plan for smart, strategic savings to replace his devastating sequester. We were all watching; we were all listening. We want to work together on this. But instead of laying out a vision for how government can avoid his sequester—his sequester—by living within its means, the President decided to make the impractical case for passing the buck onto taxpayers through even more taxes.

House Republicans have known all along the President's sequester was a terrible plan. We gave the Supercommittee a chance to do the right thing, and when they didn't, we led.

Twice since last summer we have passed legislation that would preserve savings while completely removing the threat sequester poses to American jobs and national security. The President didn't join the conversation until recently.

March 1 is coming. Will he or won't he put forth a credible plan to stop the damage of his sequester? Republicans have responded. He and our friends on the other side of the aisle have not.

OPPOSING SEQUESTRATION

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the huge education cuts that are in the sequester. Massive sequestration is an inefficient way to make spending decisions that affect millions of Americans. However, this is what we agreed to, and the House majority has not had an open and frank debate on how this Chamber can reduce our national deficit while helping our students and hardworking educational professionals succeed.

On education alone, sequestration will reduce funding for the Department of Education and Head Start by an estimated \$4.8 billion. Department of Education funding will return to pre-2003 levels, impacting between 8.9 million and 9.4 million students. Potential job losses in the education field are projected to be between 74,600 and 80,500. These cuts will come as schools and colleges enroll more students and the cost of services increases.

I call on Members on both sides of the aisle to join me in finding a better way to reduce our deficit while protecting our children, students, and educational professionals.

STRENGTHENING THE MIDDLE CLASS

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, last night President Obama outlined a bold vision for his second term in office and spoke about the number one issue facing our country: jobs. The President understands that if we want to get our country back on the right track, we have to invest in those areas that are essential to growing our economy and strengthening the middle class.

With families all across America, and particularly in my home State of Rhode Island facing tremendous challenges, it's critical that our friends on the other side of the aisle put aside partisan gamesmanship and start working together on the commonsense goals that President Obama outlined: reinvigorating manufacturing; investing in our infrastructure; making education a priority; and developing new sources of clean energy, as well as a long-term strategy to deal with our debt.

It's true that Republicans and Democrats have a choice. We can either work to find common ground and move our country forward as a whole, or we can continue the partisan fighting that has created gridlock in Washington.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to find common ground and real solutions so we can put our country back to work and address the serious challenges facing our Nation.

REPEAL AND REPLACE DANGEROUS SEQUESTER

(Mr. CARTWRIGHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, we have before us this question of allowing indiscriminate and harmful cuts to our armed services and other vital national governmental works.

I agree we must address the debt and the deficit, but it's not a new problem, and we have fixed it before. Right now, our national debt stands at about 105 percent of GDP, gross domestic product. In 1946, it was close to 122 percent, and we fixed it—not by austerity, not by slash and burn; we fixed it by investing in America. We built our national highway system. We made our armed services the envy of the world. We even rebuilt Europe and Japan. We went to the Moon, for heaven's sake.

By the 1960s, our economic growth was so great that it was impossible for anyone to complain about the Roosevelt debt with a straight face. That's what we need to do now. We need to believe in ourselves. We need to invest in the great engines of our economic recovery, our infrastructure, and our middle class.

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge the Members, be bullish on America and repeal and replace this dangerous sequester.

AMERICANS NEED REAL SOLUTIONS

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, last night at his State of the Union address, President Obama outlined a real job creation plan to grow our economy and strengthen America's middle class. However, sequestration is just 15 days away, threatening to stall our economic recovery.

Sequestration would be devastating for many programs and services that my constituents and all Americans rely on: Head Start; the Women, Infants and Children—WIC—nutrition plan; medical research funding; Indian Health Service; police officers; and food inspectors. Funding for all these crucial areas would be decimated.

Sequestration would also make our country less safe by implementing reckless, across-the-board defense cuts. We've already reduced the deficit by \$2.5 trillion, mostly through spending cuts. There's no question we can eliminate additional wasteful spending. However, we should be strategic in finding ways to reduce our deficit. With sequestration looming, Madam Speaker, Americans need real solutions, not another eleventh hour cliffhanger.

DEVASTATING SEQUESTRATION CUTS

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about the devastating sequestration cuts that are set to take effect unless we, Congress, act by March 1. If these arbitrary across-the-board cuts are allowed to occur, our military, our national security, and our communities will suffer.

Hawaii is one of the top 10 States that will take the biggest hit. We've already seen these anticipated cuts playing out at the Pearl Harbor shipyard, where 133 apprentices will not be hired and 30 temporary workers will lose their jobs. This is affecting real people, their families, as well as our military's readiness.

Times are tough and we must all share in the sacrifice, but we cannot do so at the expense of our military readiness or on the backs of our middle class families, seniors, and children.

SEQUESTRATION MEANS STUPID

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, sequestration. You know, it's inside-the-Beltway talk. What does it mean? It means stupid, across-the-board budget cuts.

Take a program of tremendous public import—whether it's a defense program, public safety program, student financial aid—and cut it 10 percent. Take a turkey, something we don't need anymore, something stupid, obsolete—registering kids for a draft that doesn't exist and will never exist—cut it 10 percent.